

## THE THANKSGIVING SERVICE WITH CHRIST LEFT OUT.

I am, Mr. Editor, the preacher of the Presbyterian church here, and am considered a pretty broad man. In looking over your news column, I failed to see a notice of our great Thanksgiving union services, held the other day, and so I take the liberty of sending you a condensed write-up of the affair. The evangelical churches joined in the services in a very fraternal spirit, as did also our neighbors, the Jews, who were not only liberal enough to enter into the combination, but who offered the use of their synagogue, which was very gratefully accepted. The Catholics were invited to join in, but were so narrow as to decline, thus missing an opportunity that may never be presented again. The rabbi, and the Christian ministers sat in a suggestive row, on the platform, and there were present many representatives of all their congregations, indulging in smiles whose broadness was eminently suited to the occasion. All the ministers present took some part in the service. I may say, just here, that we did not sing the "Long Metre Doxology", as opening feature, and that "the proprieties" also demanded that the hymn, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name", be left out.

Following the opening piece, (which was simply grand!) the learned rabbi delivered a very eloquent prayer, which, at once caught the attention of the large congregation.

Then a passage was read from the Old Testament, after which there was another rendition by the splendid choir of Jews and Christians. Then came the sermon, preached by one of the Christian ministers, which was more beautiful than any feeble words of mine can express! Of course, nothing was said about Jesus Christ and the great salvation He brings. This would have been *mal apropos*, as the services were held in a building whose use was tendered by some of His enemies. I noticed, too, in the prayers, that, while thanksgiving was offered "for the many blessings we enjoy, such as local and national prosperity, freedom in worship, and the sweet, fraternal spirit prompting and permeating such gatherings as this, etc." there was no mention of the greatest Blessing—that "unspeakable Gift" of God to a lost world, Jesus Christ, our Saviour!

Then, too, I felt somewhat awkward, when, in the prayer I offered, I was constrained, under the circumstances, to leave out the words I always use in my own church: "We come in the name of Christ."

I remembered that he himself had said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me;" and this thought presented itself, "Can we, indeed, worship God here, publicly, where we have left Jesus Christ on the other side of the door?"

Then again, when, in confessing sins and asking forgiveness, the minister omitted to urge, "For Christ's sake," I must confess that I closed my eyes more tightly, and pressed my hands to my face more closely. After the sermon, a collection was announced by the rabbi, who said "that the offering would be used in assisting unfortunate men and women and children deprived of an adequate support, in the providence of the

great God, whom we all worship." That was very pathetic and fraternal; and the contributions were large. We were then dismissed with the benediction (not apostolic) and went to our homes and turkeys. But I must confess that the following thoughts have been urging themselves insistently upon my attention, viz:

Was there not involved, on my part, a renunciation of Jesus Christ, so far, at least, as concerned this Thanksgiving service?

Was I strictly true to him when I deliberately engaged to participate officially in such services? Am I not a minister of Jesus Christ?

Is there not danger of pandering to public sentiment?

And I have determined never again to take part in any religious service where I may not freely present him as prominent and necessary—publicly acknowledging him as divine Redeemer—King of kings and Lord of lords!

The Pastor of the Libertown Presbyterian church.

### "NOT KNOWING."

Heb. 11:8.

"I know not what may befall me," God  
Tenderly shades my eyes.  
And so at each step in my onward path  
He makes new scenes arise;  
And every joy he sends me comes as a  
Sweet surprise.

I see not a step before me, yet I journey  
Without a fear;  
The past still in God's keeping—the  
Future his mercy will clear.  
And what looks dark in the distance  
May brighten as I draw near.

For perhaps the dreaded future is less  
Bitter than I think;  
The Lord may sweeten the waters  
Before I stoop to drink;  
Or if Marah must be Marah, he will  
Stand beside the brink.

It may be that he is waiting for the  
Coming of my feet.  
Some gift of such blessedness, some joy so  
Passing sweet  
That my lips shall only tremble with  
The thanks they can not speak.

Oh, restful, blissful ignorance! 'Tis blessed  
Not to know;  
It keeps me quiet in these arms that  
Will not let me go,  
And hushes my soul to rest on the  
Bosom that loves me so.

I journey on, "not knowing". I would not  
If I might;  
I would rather walk in the dark with God  
Than walk alone in the light;  
I would rather walk with him by faith  
Than walk alone by sight.

My heart shrinks back from trials that  
The future may disclose;  
Yet I never had a sorrow but as  
The dear Lord chose;  
So I send the coming tears back, with the  
Whispered words, "He knows."

Savannah, Ga.